

Conference: "A Call to Action: Cleantech Revolution in the US and China." (Shanghai) September 7-8, 2009

Public Address: Lien Chan, former Vice President, Taiwan, Chairman Emeritus, Kuomintang. September 17, 2009

Young Professionals Group: Networking Mixer with Japan Society's YPG, Ozumo Bar and Lounge. September 22, 2009

Policy Address: Andrew L.Y. Hsia, Vice Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan. With Thomas Gold, UC Berkeley. September 24, 2009

Meet the Author: Bonnie Tsui, *American Chinatown: A People's History of Five Neighborhoods*. September 29, 2009

ASNC/Shambhala Sun Conference: "Wisdom for Difficult Times: What the Buddhists Teach." With Sylvia Boorstein, Tsoknyi Rimpoche, and Zoketsu Norman Fischer. October 2-3, 2009

Panel Discussion: "The Future of Democracy in China." With Harry Harding, Orville Schell, and Minxin Pei. October 5, 2009

Asia Society's Sixth Annual Dinner



John Bilton, Art Rosenfeld, Jack Wadsworth, Chong-Moon Lee, and Vincent Lo [Tom Gibbons/Asia Society]

On May 2, 2009, Asia Society Northern California honored three remarkable individuals in the fields of environmental sustainability, green cities, and urban design in the US and Asia: Vincent Lo, Chairman & CEO of the Shui On Group (developer of Xintiandi in Shanghai), for business; John Bilton, Managing Director, PTW Architects (designer of the Watercube for the 2008 Beijing Olympics), for arts and culture; and Robert Scalapino, Professor Emeritus, UC Berkeley, for education. The Dinner featured a conversation on environmental degradation and climate change between the honorees and Dr. Jay Ogilvy, Dean of the Presidio School of Management; Dr. Art Rosenfeld, Commissioner, California Energy Commission; and Dr. Thomas Gold, ASNC board member and Berkeley Professor of Sociology. Despite the economic downturn, our sixth Annual Dinner proved a great success and raised over \$250,00 for the Northern California Center. Held at the beautiful Four Seasons Hotel San Francisco, the Dinner was attended by over 300 guests.

Annual Dinner Co-chairs and ASNC Advisory Board Members included Senator Dianne Feinstein and Richard Blum, Mike and Iris Chan, Carmen Chang, Pam and Richard Kramlich, Reiko and Chong-Moon Lee, David W. Lyon, Charlotte and George Shultz, Susy and Jack Wadsworth, Ruth and Kenneth Wilcox, Judy Wilbur, and Wayne Snyder and Kyung Yoon. Additional board members in attendance included Dipti Mathur and her husband Rakesh, Mona Lisa Yuchengco, Lenny Mendonca, and Sanjiv Sanghvi.

The Asia Society's dedication to sustainability extends far beyond the Annual Dinner, as our calendar of upcoming programs can attest. Starting this fall, watch for a conference on the clean tech revolution in China and the US, programs on Asia's environmental future, financing cleantech in the economic downturn, and preserving biodiversity in China, as well as a mini-series focusing on water issues in the US and Asia

For more information or to view a slideshow of the Dinner, please visit <http://www.asiasociety.org/centers/northern-california>.

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fax (415) 421-8707
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Message from the Director

The "Rise of Asia" inspires a constant stream of papers, books, and articles in both academia and popular culture. That a critical transition in the global economic and political sphere is underway is no longer in question, but what it means for the United States is very much open to interpretation. The discussion clearly has important social, environmental, political, financial, and cultural implications for the US. What does the rise of Asia mean in a now globalized world?

Though we tend to see Asia's rise as a recent phenomenon, the process looks very different in a broader historical context: 500 years ago, 60 percent of the world's economic output was produced in Asia, primarily India and China. Indeed, except at the height of the Roman Empire, this has been the pattern throughout most of history. The more recent, and perhaps time-bound, transition away from Asian dominance really only began with the "discovery" of the Western Hemisphere and the eventual rise of the US. From an Asian perspective, then, the "rise of Asia" looks very much like a return to business as usual.

ASNC has been addressing Asia's return to the global forefront since its inception in 1998 through a wide range of innovative programs. The coming year is no exception, with the concluding program in our *Future of Democracy in Asia* series (which will focus on prospects for political change in China); our *Off the Menu* series on Asian cuisine (with a program on Philippino cuisine at Poleng Lounge and a dinner celebrating Bay Area fusion with Momofuku's David Chang); and cutting-edge events on the financial and economic outlook (with Stephen Roach on the Asian Century and John Kynge from the *Financial Times* on the China's role in the global financial system).

Now more than ever, we thank you for your support of the Asia Society. And if you are not a member, I hope you will consider joining us!



Bruce Pickering
Executive Director

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News from the Center

Meet our Interns

The hard work and dedication of our volunteer interns are critical to the success of our programs. Please join us in welcoming our most recent interns to the Asia Society Northern California community.



Paul Joy, Diane Lu, Evan Schwartz, Scion Lee, and Carlos Cajilig

Carlos Cajilig graduated from Brown University with a B.A. in English Literature. As chair of the Filipino Alliance at Brown, he developed an interest in the issues facing the growing Asian-American community. After garnering marketing experience at software startup GotGame, Inc., Carlos joined the Asia Society to combine his passion for writing with his interest in promoting a stronger and better-connected Asian-American community in the Bay Area.

Scion Lee, originally from Korea, has completed degrees in International Studies and English. She has a passion for international development and good governance in Asia. Prior to her stint at the Asia Society, Scion taught Korean in Thailand, organized a cultural exchange camp in Egypt, helped a start-up NGO in Cambodia, taught orphans in the Philippines, and acted as a visiting student representative in North Korea. Scion joined ASNC to raise public awareness and foster dialogue between Americans, Asians, and the developing world. Her email is sion2you@naver.com.

Evan Schwartz recently graduated from Albany High School (Albany, CA) and will be a freshman at UC Santa Barbara this fall. He plans to major in International Relations and joined the Asia Society to gain hands-on experience in an international non profit. At the Asia Society, Evan is working on research and program development for our sustainable development program series, particularly in the areas of green transportation and urban planning.

Paul Joy grew up in California and holds an M.A. in Asia Pacific Studies from the University of San Francisco and a B.S. in Ecological Biology from UC San Diego. His interest in Asia stems from his experiences living and teaching in China for two years, and from a 2008 summer internship with Azure International, a clean energy development and consulting firm in Beijing. Paul is interested in the politics and economics of climate change, especially the evolving US-China relationship around these issues. He is moving back to Beijing this fall, where he will take a consulting position focused on clean tech. At the Asia Society, Paul has focused on program development and research for the *Sustainable Development in Asia* program series.

Diane Lu is currently a student at the University of California, Berkeley, where she majors in Political Economy of Industrialized Societies. She is especially interested in China's economy and government intervention in business. At the Asia Society, Diane is helping to develop a conference focused on the trends, causes, and implications of China's exploding outward direct investments. She is also a Business Analyst at Talent Advisory Board Inc., a management consulting firm, where she works on diversity initiatives. She will spend the coming fall studying in Hong Kong to enhance her understanding of public policy and China's economic development.

News from the Center



Paul Ekman and Pico Iyer



Hamid Mir



Andy Raskin

Young Professionals Group



The Asia Society Young Professionals Group (ASYPG) is an association of young professionals who share a strong interest in Asia. Its members are talented, sophisticated, and globally minded future leaders in their twenties and thirties.

Last month, ASYPG members attended an exclusive event featuring a reception and discussion with artist Ted Lincoln. Lincoln is an emerging Asian American artist featured in the Togonon Gallery exhibit, *Painting, Sculpture, and Works on Paper*.

The next exciting ASYPG event is a networking mixer with Japan Society's Young Professionals Group at Ozumo Bar and Lounge in San Francisco.

Stay tuned for more information on upcoming YPG programs this fall and beyond. If you would like to be added to the YPG mailing list, please contact Amanda Huffman at amandah@asiasoc.org.

Program Highlights

For the Love of Ramen

Instant ramen has become a ubiquitous low-cost snack, revered by college students and others looking for convenience, a quick snack, or a meal. But while it has become an indispensable part of youth culture around the world, many of its fans likely have little idea of how ramen has become such a cultural and culinary force. On June 24th, “For the Love of Ramen” sought to fill those gaps by highlighting the noodles’ cultural and economic role in 20th-century Japan and beyond.

The program featured remarks by author and journalist Andy Raskin as well as George Solt, a professor of history at New York University, who just finished his dissertation on ramen. The two speakers entertained the audience with personal anecdotes on ramen, its historical development, and the way in which political and economic events, such as the US occupation of Japan, helped bring the noodles into mainstream Japanese culture. Much of the discussion revolved around instant ramen’s culinary father, Momofuku Ando. Ando is also a primary character in Raskin’s new book, *The Ramen King and I*, a personal memoir of how Raskin connected his life to the noodle giant.

Solt observed that ramen became one of the main fuels behind Japan’s double-digit economic growth in the postwar period. It also quickly took on a certain macho persona and, despite its Chinese origins, an essential Japaneseness as well. The thinking went, Solt explained, “If you eat ramen, you’re a real man who doesn’t go for the French food or Italian food. You know who you really are and where your roots are.” Ramen consumption jumped in the 1960s and 70s as hours in the workplace soared, diets became homogenized, and family structure became less traditional and more nuclear.

Raskin and Solt both saw Momofuku Ando as playing a critical role in creating ramen’s tough-guy image. Before his success with ramen, Ando had repeatedly failed in business and had been jailed twice. He had even been tortured by the postwar occupation government on suspicion of selling government property.

The Ando legend has helped make ramen a larger-than-life cultural as well as culinary force, one not always in keeping with Japan’s toe-the-line corporate norms. In magazines, Solt said, there are advertisements asking “Are you a salaried employee at a large corporation who has become frustrated with your life? The answer to your problems may be opening up a ramen shop.”

In their wide-ranging conversation, Raskin and Solt also addressed the process of transforming Chinese noodles to suit Japanese tastes, and how China’s loss of influence in terms of high culture helped pave the way to introduce affordable Chinese noodles into Meiji-era Japan.

Inevitably, the conversation turned local as well. Asked where to go for the best ramen in San Francisco, Raskin was unequivocal: “There is no good ramen in San Francisco.” But if you make it to New York, he added, there’s always Ippudo. Just be prepared to wait in line!

The Global Financial Crisis in Asia and the US



David Wong, Robert Madsen, Sanjiv Sanghvi,
Barry Eichengreen, and Jack Wadsworth

The global financial crisis has seriously undermined economic growth models across the world, and the economy will not recover until 2011 at the earliest. That was the key message from Robert Ward, Director of the Global Forecasting team at the Economist Intelligence Unit, who keynoted a June 9, 2009 Asia Society conference on the global financial crisis. In a wide-ranging address touching on global financial reform, currency issues, and national, regional, and global growth prospects, Ward highlighted both the rising prominence of China and the continued importance of the United States in the global economy.

Ward likened the current US-China economic relationship, where excess Chinese savings fund excess American consumption, to that between a drug dealer and addict. “We don’t expect these economic imbalances to disappear,” said Ward, “but money is being thrown at the problem in a way that will continue further consumption in the US.” The US imports \$4 billion worth of goods from China for every \$1 billion it exports there. “But riding out this bad marriage would be far better than a bitter divorce,” he added, especially given rising protectionist and nationalist sentiments in both countries.

On the currency question, a long-term source of friction between the two countries, Ward argued that the Chinese yuan is not sufficiently mature to replace the dollar as a global reserve currency. “China simply does not have deep enough liquidity, or fully-trustworthy markets to compete with the dollar for now,” he said.

In the US banking sector, where the global crisis began in 2007, “The underlying problems still have not been corrected,” Ward said. “Therefore, banking reform and recovery will take years, not months.” He also cautioned against bank nationalization, saying that “banks are international in life, and national in death. Playing politics with the banking industry would only prolong the road to recovery.”

Ward’s remarks on Japan’s economic prospects were no more reassuring. “Japan has become extremely vulnerable economically because of its massive asset collapse...which makes me conclude that it is not a key economic driver anymore.”



Robert Ward, Kausik Rajgopal, C. Richard Kramlich,
Henny Sender, and Qi Bin

Program Highlights

Scaling Up: From Green Buildings to Green Cities



The Hon. Gavin Newsom, Mayor of San Francisco

Building green cities can empower local communities, save money, and is not as difficult as skeptics think. This was the key message shared by over thirty policymakers, business professionals, and political leaders at “Scaling Up: From Green Buildings to Green Cities in the US and China.” The Asia Society conference, which drew over 400 attendees, was held at PG&E’s San Francisco headquarters on May 1st, 2009.

Keynoting the event were Dr. Amory Lovins, Co-founder, Chairman, and Chief Scientist at the Rocky Mountain Institute; John Bilmon, Managing Director of PTW Architects and chief designer of Beijing’s Water Cube; and San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom.

Dr. Lovins focused his remarks on efficiency. “Energy efficiency technology is the low-hanging fruit that has fallen off the tree and is now piling up around our ankles,” he began. At \$0.01 per kilowatt hour, efficiency is by far the cheapest answer to our energy woes, particularly compared to the cost of building more coal or nuclear power plants.

Lovins advocated the widespread adoption of his innovative “Integrated Design” concept in buildings and energy systems. “Chinese cooking is famous for using everything,” he explained. “Why don’t we do the same with our energy design?” Lovins also pushed for introducing progressive building incentives by paying architects and designers for energy saved over the lifetime of a building.

PTW’s John Bilmon made the case for sustainable buildings with a case study of the Water Cube. One of its many innovative features: the facility’s bubble-like structure was designed to absorb or reflect thermal radiation depending on the air temperature. “This saves



John Bilmon

more energy than installing PV (solar),” he said.

Moving beyond the case study, Bilmon also considered the immense challenges and opportunities in China and made a pitch for large-scale collaboration and scaling up – the rallying point for the conference as a whole. “It is not possible for one person, but rather requires teams working together, to really effect sustainable development on a large scale....And this era represents a coming of age for China as an increased number of people have now been exposed and plugged into the process of deciding what their buildings and cities look like. They can have a say.”

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom further underscored the importance of cooperation, especially between San Francisco and Shanghai. In 2008, he said, San Francisco opened its first-ever foreign office in Shanghai, “because we wanted to establish this (cooperation) consciousness in China more firmly....San Francisco is a gateway city. It’s natural that the dialogue between our respective countries allows us to meet in this state and certainly this city. And we look forward to developing formidable partnerships and working together on the challenge that we all recognize needs to be addressed.”

Asia Society is the leading global and pan-Asian organization working to strengthen relationships and promote understanding among the people, leaders, and institutions of the United States and Asia.

We seek to increase knowledge and enhance dialogue, encourage creative expression, and generate new ideas across the fields of policy, business, education, arts, and culture. Founded in 1956, Asia Society is a nonpartisan, nonprofit educational institution with offices in Hong Kong, Houston, Los Angeles, Manila, Melbourne, Mumbai, New York, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, and



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